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PRESENTS

PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH)

A MERCY TO ALL CREATION!

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ

We sent thee not, but as a Mercy for all creatures.

Holy Qur'an (21:107)



بسم اللہ الرحمٰن الرحیم

اَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ

میں گواہی دیتا ہوں کہ اللہ کے سوا کوئی معبود نہیں وہ ایک ہے اور اس کا کوئی

لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ

شریک نہیں اور میں گواہی دیتا ہوں کہ محمد (مصطفیٰ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم) اللہ کے بندے اور اس کے رسول ہیں۔



لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله

**"I testify that there is no god but Almighty God,
Almighty God is One (and eternal)
and has no partner,
I also testify that Muhammad (pbuh) is a slave
and the messenger of Almighty God."**

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INTRODUCTION

He did not speak or advocate the cause of some particular race or ethnic group, but stood up for all humanity irrespective of race, color, class, language or geographical barriers. The Message he preached was universal, transgressing all obstacles whether artificial or otherwise. A Message so complete and comprehensive that it not only revolutionized the era in which it was proclaimed, but even today its timeless beauty has lost none of the original charm and continues its profound appeal to the human intellect.

What was that unique Message and who was the Messenger? Is it capable of solving the modern world's myriad problem? Will it cater to the complicated aspects, characteristics and needs of human-beings, especially those of contemporary man? Does it provide political or social answers? Can it stimulate the intellect for scientific and technical discoveries? And how about moral and spiritual aspects? Did the Messenger set any worthy example by practicing what he preached, or was he just one of those fanciful visionaries?

The answer to all the above questions and even many more is, ***yes***, it does. If the principles of this immortal message are sincerely observed, and if we are ready to tread the footsteps of that fantastic man, not only does it guarantee us a harmonious co-existence on this earth but also a blissful life in the hereafter. The moment modern man is ready to cast aside his blinkered lenses of prejudice and vain pride, he will understand that the eternal truth called '*ISLAM*' and the final Prophet named '*MUHAMMAD*' were not something special or essential to the Arabia of 14 centuries ago, but are capable of remarkably solving the complex issues of our era, the Space Age.

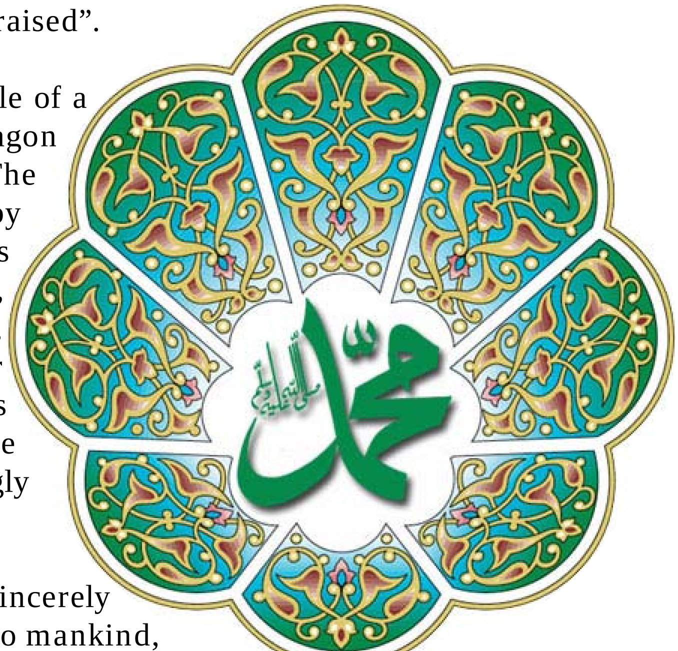
Islam is a derivative of the word '*Salaam*' (peace) and literally means submission. Submission to none except the One and only Almighty God, Who designed this vast universe, shaped the human race as the most excellent form of life, and moreover endowed them the power of intellect. Wonderful indeed! Because this unique submission frees mankind from all other forms of submission to idols, object ideas and the supposedly mysterious powers of nature. As it is quite clear, Islam was not just some spontaneous burst or mirage on the burning sands of Arabia. In fact it marks the culmination and perfect ness of all previous divine messages ever revealed. And to carry out the great task of proclaiming His final message, the Almighty chose Muhammad (the Admirable) as the last Prophet, who was prophesied in all earlier Scriptures and whose life-style serves as a perfect model for us.

What can we write about a man who changed the destiny of the world and saved the human race from sure disaster! The loss in words becomes more apparent when we consider that he was divinely chosen for this great task and carried out the mission entrusted, in a most impeccable and flawless manner. He was every inch a perfect man, so complete that even his detractors and enemies could not find the smallest fault in his glowing personality. He was by far the most remarkable man that ever set foot on this earth. He preached a religion, founded a state, built a nation, laid down a moral code, and initiated numerous social and political reforms. He established a powerful and dynamic society to practice and represent his teachings and completely revolutionized the worlds of human thought and behavior for all times to come.

When the Holy Qur'an (Islam's revealed text) describes him as the "*Noblest Exemplar*" for the human race including generations to come, it becomes all the more obvious that Prophet Muhammad was something extraordinary and endowed with all fine qualities such as patience, courage, wisdom, generosity, intelligence, love and magnanimity -to cite a few- which show us how to mould our own lives.

HOLY PROPHET (PBUH)
THE MODEL OF GOODNESS

Prophet Muhammad Mustafa Bin Abdullah (peace upon him and his family), known as As-Sadiq (the Truthful) and Al-Ameen (the Trustworthy) from his youth and was sent as the Mercy for this World and the Hereafter and the Last Messenger of God Almighty and the Seal of the Prophethood. The name Muhammad means “highly praised”.



Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is the finest example of a perfect man in every sense of the term. He was a paragon of virtue and is the best exemplar for the human race. The Almighty distinguished him from all and sundry by instilling in his sublime personality such fine qualities as modesty, truthfulness, kindness, patience, loyalty, honesty, courage, bravery, generosity, magnanimity, wisdom and the like. By studying his lofty character and the amazingly simple life he (pbuh) led with his household, companions, wives and others. We are able to learn valuable lessons from his conduct & accordingly mould our own life-style.

Our society could never be an Islamic one unless we sincerely tread the footsteps of Almighty God’s final Messenger to mankind, heed his sayings, observe his glorious actions and attitudes, and most important of all follow them, as the faithful among his sincere companions followed and believed as shown in the following story:

One day the great Prophet of Almighty God (pbuh) while entering the city of Madina, saw a Jewish Man, just few steps ahead of him, taking his very good breed of Horse towards market to sell.



The Holy Prophet (pbuh) liked the Horse. So he negotiated with the Jewish Man and bought it at an agreed price.

The Holy Prophet (pbuh) did not have money on him at the time so he asked the Jewish Man to follow him up to his home and he would pay him his due. The Jewish Man agreed.

As they were going, another man approached and asked the Jewish Man if he was selling his Horse and for how much. He said that he had already sold the Horse to the Holy Prophet (pbuh) for such and such amount. This man offered him better price and he agreed to sell the Horse to him.

The Holy Prophet (pbuh) said to the Jewish Man that since he had already sold the Horse to him, it was wrong to break the agreement just like that. The Jewish Man denied making any agreement.

Whilst all this was going on, the passers by stopped and wondered as to what was going on. The Prophet of Almighty God explained exactly what happened.

Companions: “O Prophet of Almighty, do you have any witnesses to support your claim?”

Holy Prophet: No. We have no witnesses as there was no one present when the agreement was made.

Companions: Sorry, we don’t think we can help you. How can we be sure who is telling the truth and who is lying?

A very close and sincere companion of the Holy Prophet (pbuh), Huzaima Ibn Sabit (RA) happened to pass by and saw the Holy Prophet (pbuh) surrounded by the people. On inquiring about it, came to know what happened.

Huzaima (RA): The Holy Prophet (pbuh) of Almighty is telling the truth and the Jewish Man is lying.

The Holy Prophet (pbuh): But you were not present when the agreement was made. So how can you judge without being there?

Huzaima Ibn Sabit (RA): O Prophet of Almighty, you said that there is God and we believed you, even though we haven’t seen Him. You told us that Qur’an was the word of Almighty and we believed you. You told us about Angels, Heaven and Hell and we believed you, even though we haven’t seen all these things. How is it possible that you would lie about such petty thing?

The moral of the story is that there were some companions who walked, sat and ate with the Prophet of Almighty God, but did not grasp his inner personality and at the same time there were also some other companions of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) who understood him physically as well as spiritually.

Hence we should also follow our Holy Prophet (pbuh) with complete belief as Huzaima Ibn Sabit (RA) shown in the above story but not as other companions did.

In short, Almighty God the most Glorious enjoins upon us to take the Holy Prophet’s behavior as an example, because he guides us to virtue and righteousness:

“Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the latter day and remembers Allah much.” Holy Qur’an (33: 21)

Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) used to give lot of importance to moral behavior by saying: “*The best of you are those who have the best morals.*” And “*I have been sent to complete the best morals.*”

The behavior and personality of Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) are the best examples to follow in Life. A companion of his, who spent full ten (10) years with him, has said: “Throughout my stay with him I never heard an indecent word from his lips and never found him rude to anyone. He (pbuh) spoke very politely. He (pbuh) was kind to everyone.”

The Holy Prophet of Islam spoke in short, meaningful sentences and was never seen or heard to interrupt anybody’s speech. He never spoke with a morose face, nor did he ever apply rough, awkward words. He invariably stood by his words and pledges. The Holy Prophet of Islam would never permit anybody to backbite others and said, “I want to meet people with a loving heart.”

Although Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the Prophet of Almighty and had been appointed by

Almighty God to guide the people, yet he was not ashamed of doing his work with his own hands. He (pbuh) assisted the members of his family in household work and performed the jobs of other persons with great pleasure. He mended his clothes and shoes. He also took part in the construction of Masjid al-Nabi in Medina along with his companions.

He (pbuh) was so kind and generous that he never refused a reasonable request of any person. He (pbuh) often distributed edibles among others and went without meals himself. He (pbuh) always helped the needy and the poor and went to the houses of the sick to enquire after their health.

Whenever he met anyone he said, *'Salamun Alaikum' (Peace be to you)*. He always spoke with a smiling face. And always advice his companions: "When you meet each other then initiate greeting (Salam) and embrace; and when you separate from each other, then depart with seeking forgiveness."

The Holy Prophet (pbuh) was a model of all the virtues and qualities of a believer described in the Holy Qur'an. None can describe him better than Almighty who has said he possessed the noblest character. ***And most surely you conform (yourself) to sublime morality.*** Holy Qur'an (68:4)

Now, we shall study some aspects of his admirable character:

THE HOLY PROPHET'S CLEANLINESS AND ORDERLINESS:

The Holy Prophet of Islam was fond of scent and spent more on buying perfumes than on food. His pleasant smell filled the air of any place he passed, so that whosoever passed there knew that the Holy Prophet of Islam had passed that way.

He used to brush his teeth frequently and washed his blessed hands and mouth both before and after meals. Whenever the Holy Prophet of Islam was about to leave his house, he would look into a mirror or into water; he always left home with a clean, pleasant appearance. His dress was always clean, though simple. He was very mindful of cleanliness.

"Keep yourselves far from envy, because it eats up and takes away good actions, like the fire that eats up and burns wood."





CONTEMPLATION AND WISDOM

The Holy Prophet of Islam took lessons from watching the sky, the moon, the sun, and every other thing in nature, and these phenomena attracted him to their Creator more than to themselves. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) always used to contemplate the Greatness and Majesty of Almighty God, the Glorious and the welfare of the human race. He closely followed the affairs of his people and the spreading of the light of Islam. He talked only when necessary and when he did; his speech was devoid of any rhetoric and unnecessary words. It was precise, to the point and full of great meanings.

PUNCTUALITY AND DAILY SCHEDULE: He (PBUH) was punctual, active and energetic, and led an orderly life in the strict sense of the word. He was so devout and pious that not even for a single moment was he enchanted by any luxury or pleasure of this mortal world. In short, the Holy Prophet of Islam was a perfect model of all excellent virtues and sublime human qualities. His day was divided into four periods:

1. A time for worship.
2. A time for his household (Ahlul-Bait) and wives, during which he behaved like any ordinary family man giving the finest example of social behavior.
3. A time for rest and contemplation.
4. A time for public affairs such as receiving Muslims, looking into their needs and requirements, answering their questions, teaching them the tenets of Islam and expounding to them the glorious verses of the Holy Qur'an.



SOME OF HIS WISE SAYINGS ON "TIME":

1. Blessed be my people for their early rising up.
2. Too much sleep does away with both religion and the world.
3. O People, you have certain (special) characteristics, so get to (emphasize) them and you have an end, so get to (be prepared for) it..., a servant of Almighty God should take (make provisions) for himself from his self: from his world (life) for his hereafter, during his youth before his old age, and in life before death. By the One in whose hand is Muhammad's soul after death there will be no blaming, and after this world there is nothing except Paradise or Hell.

All praise belongs to Almighty God, and may salutations and benedictions be upon the Messenger of Almighty.





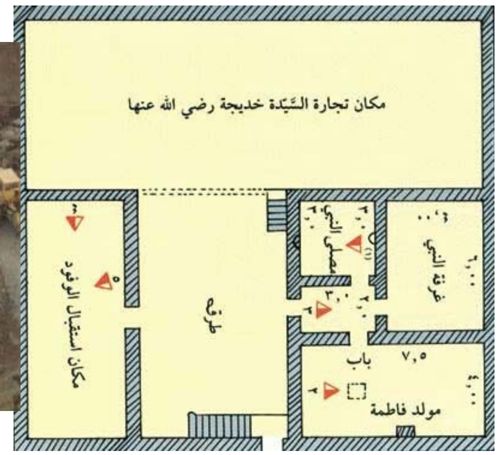
MODESTY AND SIMPLICITY

He (pbuh) was the finest embodiment of modesty, and deeply abhorred arrogance and haughtiness. Almost all of his companions in the early days were poor and oppressed people, as he was the champion of the downtrodden and the defender of the deprived masses.

His house was simple and modest, built of clay bricks, palm leaves and trunks. His food was simple like that of the poor, consisting mostly of barley bread. There were occasions when he might skip that meager meal too. He socialized with his companions as one of them: talking, listening, smiling and displaying a sense of humor. Sometimes he might join in their laughter to cheer their sprits up. He would visit them when they fell sick or accept an invitation for a meal irrespective of whether the person concerned was poor, a slave or any other. In case a companion of his died, he used to participate in the funeral procession, walking alongside the bier.







The Holy Prophet of Islam immensely loved the ritual prayers, but on occasions when people demanded to talk to him about something, he would say his ritual prayers briefly and instead, pay attention to the demands and needs of the people. He would spare no efforts to fulfill the people’s needs.

The Prophet treated everyone with great respect and considered nobility and honor to be owing to faith, piety, and good behavior. He was not interested in wealth or status. He had no love for luxuries or the illusions of this mortal world, nor did he revere anybody for his riches or position. He was never enchanted by any worldly things, and he invariably looked upon this world’s life as a passing one. His behavior towards slaves was amazingly affectionate, and he would do his best to remove the troubles and sufferings of the slaves and the poor. His modesty was peerless. He was extremely patient, tolerant, and forgiving.

The Holy Prophet was justly angered when he observed a violation of God’s commands and of Islam and was most pleased at the good deeds. Both his pleasure and displeasure were for God.

“Say. Surely my prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are (all) for Allah, the Lord of the worlds.” Holy Qur’an (6:162)

Owing to his great modesty, he normally preferred riding a mule while moving around, using a saddle made of date-palm fiber. Sometimes he also rode his she-camel. If he was riding and somebody wished to accompany him on foot, he would ask him either to mount behind, and if the man declined out of respect, he would ask him to go ahead and await him at the fixed place, because he did not like the sight of people following him on foot, while he himself was mounted.

The Holy Prophet of Islam possessed the magnificent status of prophecy and divine leadership, but his manners in dealing with the people and his way of life were so simple and gentle that when he was among the people and a newcomer wanted to know about him, he had to ask, “Which one of you is the Prophet”?

The Holy Prophet of Islam did not care to sit down in the seat of honor in gatherings, and on entering any place would sit down in the first empty seat available, so that his companions might not think that he was sporting an air of superiority over them. He did not let anybody stand up before him and treated others most respectfully. Of course, the virtuous people were most revered by him.

His magnetic personality drew love and respect from all. He used to sit on the ground, even while eating, and slept on the ground with a simple mat serving as his bed. He greeted even small boys, as well as women. If some man shook hands with him, he would not unclasp his hand till the other did it first.

Once, a Christian chieftain named Adi bin Hatam al-Ta’i, came for an audience with the Prophet of Islam, who happened to be sitting on a cushion. On seeing the visitor he took the cushion from underneath and offered it to his Christian guest, himself preferring to sit on the ground. This admirable display of modesty by the great Prophet so deeply affected Adi bin Hatam al-Ta’i, that the Christian chief immediately embraced Islam.

THE GIFT: Whenever they reaped their first harvest, they brought early, fresh fruits to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Then he would distribute them among those who sat around him. This morning, a poor man brought one fruit from his small farm and gave it to the Holy Prophet (pbuh).



He (pbuh) accepted the gift, tasted it and then went on eating it alone while the companions watched. One of those present meekly said: O Prophet of Almighty God, you have over looked the right of those who watch while you eat? The Holy Prophet (pbuh) smiled and waited till the man who had brought the fruit had gone. Then he (pbuh) said: I tasted the fruit and it was not yet ripe. Had I allowed you to have some of it, someone would have definitely shown his distaste, thus disappointing the poor man who had brought the gift. Rather than make him feel disappointing, my palate accepted the bitterness.

This is how Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) taught us best of morals and excellent manners. By living a simple and ordinary life and treating everybody alike with courtesy and respect, he was able to spread the light of Islam. His immaculate personality and lofty character, coupled with his honesty and wisdom, attracted multitudes of people towards truth and justice.

Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) pays great importance to the behavior of human beings amongst each other in a society. Hence, always seems advising the following:

1. Deal gently with people, and be not harsh; cheer them and condemn not.
2. The best of friends is he who is best in behavior and character.
3. One who does not practice modesty and does not refrain from shameless deeds is not a Muslim.
4. Much silence and a good disposition; there are no two works better than these.

KINDNESS AND FORGIVENESS

More than 1400 years ago in Arabia the people were living very much in fear. They feared their neighbors. They feared other tribes. They even feared their idols. For this was the time before Islam. The Arabs were worshipping idols. In their ignorance they would burry their newly born daughters alive. As Islam began to spread among Arabs such cruel practices stopped. Islam taught love and peace. It taught kindness and respect.

Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) himself was a very kind and loving person. He treated every one, young and old, with kindness and respect.

Because the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was spreading the word of God. And he was changing, for better, the lives of many Arabs and because some Arabs felt that by the teaching of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) their old idols were losing power. They disliked Holy Prophet (pbuh) and planned to kill him. Every time they tried to kill him, they failed. This angered the enemies of Islam even more. So they began to harass him in every way they knew.

One old woman made a habit of throwing rubbish on the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) whenever he passed from her house. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) had to pass that house daily on the way to the Mosque. Even when the old woman threw rubbish on him, he would pass silently without showing any anger or annoyance. This was a regular, daily event.

One day when the Holy Prophet (pbuh) was passing by the old woman was not there to throw the rubbish. He (pbuh) stopped and asked the neighbor about her well-being. The neighbor informed the Holy Prophet (pbuh) that the old woman was sick on bed. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) politely asked permission to visit the old woman. When allowed he (pbuh) entered the house, the old woman thought that he had come there to take his revenge when she was unable to defend herself because of sickness. But the Holy Prophet assured her that he had come to her, not to take any revenge, but to see her and to look after her needs, as it was the command of Almighty God that if any one is sick, a Muslim should visit him and should help him if his help is needed.



The old woman was greatly moved by this kindness and love of the Holy Prophet (pbuh). By the example of greatness of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), she understood that he was truly the Prophet of God and Islam was the true religion. She accepted Islam at once.

THE PROPHET'S VISIT TO TAIF: Abu Talib and Khadija were the main supporters of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). It was so destined that they passed away within a few days of each other, leaving the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to lament the bereavement. He had lost a caring uncle and a loving wife.

The enemies were now relieved, because Abu Talib was no more to protect. A few days after Abu Talib's death, when the Prophet was once passing through a lane, a woman emptied her garbage from a window upon his head. He returned home with his head soiled. His young daughter Fatima (pbuh) sat beside him, consoling and washing off the dirt.

As things became intolerable in Makkah, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) decided to move to Taif

where he thought he would convey the message of Almighty God to the tribe of Thaqeef. Taif was known for its pleasant climate and beautiful scenery.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) knew very well that people at Taif were no different from Makkans. They also worshipped idols and were in constant contact with the people in Makkah. But he (pbuh) did not despair, who dedicated his life for Islam by putting himself in danger like no other. As he entered Taif, and proclaimed his prophet hood, people jeered at him. One said: "God did not find anyone else for His message except you?" Another said: "I must be naive or a thief if I believed you to be a prophet." And so it went on.

Then in order to prevent him from preaching Islam, people of Taif set a group of children and vagabonds behind him. They pestered him and threw stones at him. Tired, forsaken and wounded, he sought refuge in a nearby garden. It belonged to Atabah and Shaibah, two wealthy chiefs of Quraish. They were both there when the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) entered and sat under a distant tree. He was alone. Then he raised his face towards heaven and prayed: *"O Almighty! I raise unto you my complaint for my weakness, my helplessness, and for the ridicule to which I have been subjected. O Merciful of all the Mercifuls! You are the Master of all oppressed people, You are my God! So to whom would You consign me? To the strangers who would ill-treat me, or to the enemies who have an upper hand over me? If whatever has befallen me is not because of Your wrath, then I fear not. No doubt, the field of Your security and care is wide enough for me. I seek refuge in Your light which illuminates darkness and straightens the affairs of this world and hereafter, that Your displeasure and wrath may not descend upon me. For the sake of Your pleasure, I remain pleased and resigned to my fate. No change in this world occurs without Your Will."*

Atabah and Shaibah were watching. They sent for their servant named Adaas and gave him a plate full of grapes. "Take this to that man under the tree," they ordered.

Adaas was a Christian. He brought the grapes to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and bid him eat. As the Prophet (pbuh) picked a bunch he said: "Bismillahir Rahmaanir Rahim" (In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate). Adaas had never heard this before. He was impressed by it, because the man was invoking mercy and compassion of Almighty in spite of his desolate state.

"Who are you?" Adaas asked. "I am the Prophet of God. Where do you come from?"

The servant said: "I am Adaas, a Christian. I come from Nainava."



"Nainava? You come from a place where my brother Yunus bin Mati (Jonah son of Mati) lived," the Holy Prophet (pbuh) said. Adaas was surprised to hear the name.

"What do you know of Yunus? Here no one seems to know him. Even in Nainava there were hardly ten people who knew his father's name."

The Holy Prophet (pbuh) said: "Yes, I know him because just like me, he was a Prophet of Almighty God."

Adaas fell on his knees before the Holy Prophet (pbuh), kissed his hand and embraced Islam.

KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY

The Messenger's social ties with his companions portray the most wonderful picture of Islamic brotherhood ever heard of. The following narratives give us a glimpse of his firm ties, with the society in which he lived:

Anas bin Malik, who used to frequent the Prophet's assembly, says that whenever the Prophet missed any one of his companions for a period of three (3) days, he used to inquire about that person, would pray for him and if he happened to be ill, would pay him a visit.

Another companion Jarir bin Abdullah, says that once the Prophet entered a house, and soon it was full of people. When Jarir went in, he found no vacant spot and therefore sat outside. The Prophet observing Jarir took a piece of his clothing, rolled it up and threw it, indicating him to spread it underneath him. Jarir says he caught hold of the clothing, put it on his face and kissed it.

SACRIFICE OF THE LAMB: On group journeys, the Holy Prophet would work like the others and would never let anybody work instead of him. Once just as the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), and his noble companions landed from their rides, and laid the loads down, it was decided that they would sacrifice a lamb for dinner.



One of the companions volunteered: "I will sacrifice the lamb."

Another companion said: "I will skin it."

Third companion said: "I will cook it."

Fourth companion said: "I will...."

The Holy Prophet (pbuh) said: "I will gather the wood from the desert."

The group: "O Messenger of Almighty God, don't make discomfort yourself as such, you rest. We will be honored to do all this on our own."

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh): "I know that you are eager to do it all, but Almighty God is not pleased with the slave who distinguishes between himself and his companions, and considers himself better than others."

Then he (pbuh) went to the desert, and gathered some firewood, and brought it to the group.

TYING THE CAMEL: The caravan had been traveling for few hours now. Signs of fatigue were obvious on their faces. They arrived at a point and stopped. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) who was also in the caravan, stopped the camel, and landed. Prior to anything, they were in search of water to prepare for prayer.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) also started searching for water. But soon, returned to his Camel, without saying anything to anyone. The companions were surprised that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had ordered stopping here, and now perhaps he would like to move again? Eyes and ears were awaiting his order. But the surprise of the group increased as they saw him approach his

Camel, and tied its knees, and returned back in search of water. Noises were raised from every corner: "O Prophet of Almighty God! Why didn't you order us to do this for you, and instead you put yourself in discomfort? We would have proudly done that service for you."



The Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) responded: "Never seek others' help in your affairs, don't lean on others, even if it is a small piece of Miswak (the wood used for brushing teeth)."

IFTAR (BREAK THE FAST): Anas bin Malik (RA) was one of the companions who had served the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) for many years. He therefore knew the Prophet's habits very well.

When Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) observed a fast, he usually broke it with milk and dates, and in the small hours of the night, he would take simple food for his Sahar.

One day, Anas knew that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was fasting; so he arranged for his Iftar. He kept the milk and dates ready. At the time of Iftar the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) did not appear, for the breaking of the fast. Anas thought that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) might have accepted an invitation and broken his fast elsewhere. So Anas ate the food himself and retired.

When Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) entered the house with another companion, Anas inquired from the companion whether the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had already eaten. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) had been dealing with some urgent work and was delayed, and he had not eaten.

Anas felt so ashamed. There was nothing left he could offer to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), if he asked for food. Still he waited expectantly, ready to explain the situation to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) immediately sensed that Anas was hesitant, so he remained silent and retired to bed hungry with a cheerful face. The next day he also fasted.

Anas used to say: "The Messenger of God never mentioned this incident during his lifetime to anyone."

The above actions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) provide us the finest example of a leader unaffected by power and position whereas when we look at the lives of despots and other petty potentates, we see them sporting arrogant airs, trying to humiliate people, and always keeping a distance from the oppressed and the poor.

It will not be out of context here to cite another example from the Prophet's life. Once a man came to the Messenger of Almighty God but on entering his presence, started trembling with fear. Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) seeing the visitor terribly shaken and nervous, smiled and comforted him with utmost tenderness, saying: *"Relax man take it easy, I am no king but the son of a Quraishite woman who used to eat dried meat."*

How wonderfully he comforts a frightened Arab nomad, who accustomed to the days of ignorance (Jahiliyyah) was scared to death on entering the Prophet's presence. This is one of the many instances, which prove that he is the Mercy for the human race and not one of those power-drunk despots who kill and terrorize Almighty God's creatures.

Such supreme examples of kindness and generosity helped build a strong and coherent society and spread love and affection among the believers. Therefore it is obligatory for Muslims to learn a lesson from these admirable manners and tread the brilliant path blazed by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). All Muslims should endeavor to acquire these lofty morals, especially those invested with power and authority, so that peace, love and harmony may prevail all around. If it is a real Islamic society, it will naturally be just and free, where everyone can defend their right and even advise those in authority if they happen to err.



COURAGE AND VALOR: Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was second to none in Almighty God's creation, beginning from Prophet Adam (pbuh) till eternity. He was an excellent exemplar of the noblest manners and merits including courage and bravery. His valor was a byword among his contemporaries, for he stood up gallantly against the heaviest odds, endured pain and injuries a victoriously fought, overcame and showed mercy to the stone-hearted infidels of ignorant Arabia. Magnanimity is the finest form of valor and the Prophet excelled in this particular field, forgiving enemies and freeing multitudes from injustice, oppression, servitude and ignorance.

Some of the glimpses of his many gallant deeds:

He endured pain and sufferings for thirteen long years in Makkah, inviting people to Islam, without once being over-awed by the sheer force and numbers of arrogant Jahiliyya. And all these single handedly without any group or supporters except his few weak but devoted followers.

After migrating to Medina he organized an army to defend against the idolaters and he himself led the faithful in many a battle against overwhelming odds, always coming out victorious. The Battles of Badr, Uhud, Khaibar, Khandaq, Hunayn and the conquest of Makkah were some of the epoch-making events.

His faithful and equally brave cousin Imam Ali (pbuh), who was the standard bearer in several decisive battles and who while defending Islam and the Prophet, sent many obstinate bullies of ignorant Arabia to the eternal fire, describes the Messenger's bravery as follows:

"You have beheld me on the day of Badr, all of us took refuge with the Prophet (pbuh), and he was the nearest one to the enemy ranks. He was on that day, the bravest of us all."

Anas bin Malik (RA) , a companion, describes the Prophet as the bravest and the most generous of all men. Anas citing an example say that one night Muslims heard loud noises coming from outside the town. Thinking it to be enemy forces they rushed out to the place from where the noises were coming but to their surprise found the Prophet of Islam at the spot well ahead of them. The incident indicates Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) valor and courage; how he sallied forth in the dark night alone to trace the source of those strange sounds, without once being scared of the enemy or whatever that lurked around.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Holy Qur'an and the Traditions of the Prophet (Hadith or Sunnah) are the sources from which every Muslim woman derives her rights and duties.

Today people think that women are liberated in the West and that the women's liberation movement began in the 20th century. Actually, the women's liberation movement was not begun by women, but was revealed by Almighty God in the 7th century to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Islam, fourteen centuries ago, made women equally accountable to God in glorifying and worshipping Him - setting no limits on her moral progress. Also, Islam established a woman's equality in her humanity with men. Since men and women both came from the same essence, they are equal in their humanity. Neither gender can be superior because it would be a contradiction of equality.

The Muslim woman was given a role, duties and rights 1400 years ago that most women do not enjoy today, even in the West. These are from God and are designed to keep balance in society. What may seem unjust or missing in one place is compensated for or explained in another place. *Islam is a complete way of life.*

CARE FOR ANIMALS: A man once came to Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) carrying with him his belongings and a box. He said, "O Prophet! While I was passing through a jungle, I heard the voice of some bird's babies. I took them and put them in this box. The moment I did that, their mother came fluttering round my head."

The Holy Prophet (pbuh) said, "Put them down." When the man put the box on the ground, the mother of the young birds joined them. Seeing this, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) asked the man who now had a look of surprise on his face, "Are you surprised by the affection of the mother towards her young? I swear by Him (Almighty God) who has sent me, surely, God is more loving to his servants than the mother to these young birds. Return these baby birds to the place from where you took them, and let their mother be with them."

"Fear God with regard to animals", said the Prophet of Islam (pbuh), "ride them when they are fit to be ridden, and get off their backs when they are tired; surely, there are rewards for being kind and gentle to animals, and for giving them water to drink."

Islam has taught that in the eyes of Almighty God, animals also have rights in the same way as man has. They should not be treated badly, tortured or left to starve without food or water.

The Prophet of Islam (pbuh) was once performing ablution (Wudhu) for prayers from a pot of water. A Cat passed there and turned its eyes at the pot of water with a thirsty look. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) realized at once that the Cat was very thirsty, so he stopped the ablution (Wudhu) and placed the pot before the Cat.



Only after the Cat had fully quenched its thirst, did the Holy Prophet (pbuh) resume the ablution (Wudhu). By this action, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) has shown that quenching the thirst of even a small dumb animal is a noble act full of virtue and should be given first attention before one prepares for offering prayers to Almighty God.

TELLING THE TRUTH

Once a man came to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and said, “Oh prophet of Almighty God, I have many bad habits. Which one of them should I give up first?” The Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, “Give up telling lies first and always speak the truth.” The man promised to do so and went home.

At night the man was about to go out to steal. Before setting out, he thought for a moment about the promise he made with the prophet. “If tomorrow the prophet asks me where have I been, what shall I say? Shall I say that I went out stealing? No, I cannot say that. But nor can I lie. If I tell the truth, everyone will start hating me and call me a thief. I would be punished for stealing.”

So the man decided not to steal that night, and gave up this bad habit.

Next day, he felt like drinking wine, when he was about to do so, he said to himself, “What shall I say to the prophet if he asks me what did I do during the day? I cannot tell a lie, and if I speak the truth people will hate me, because a Muslim is not allowed to drink wine.” And so he gave up the idea of drinking wine.

In this way, whenever the man thought of doing something bad, he remembered his promise to tell the truth at all times. One by one, he gave up all his bad habits and became a good Muslim and a very good person.

Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: *“No Man can attain a firm faith, unless he develops strength of character and that can not be achieved unless one acquires the habit of speaking truth.”*

HOLY PROPHET (PBUH) AND EDUCATION: One of the distinctive features of Islam is its emphasis on knowledge. The Holy Qur’an and the Islamic Tradition (Sunnah) invite Muslims to seek and acquire knowledge and wisdom and to hold men of knowledge in high esteem.



The first few verses of Holy Qur’an that were revealed to our Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) mention the importance of reading, pen, and teaching for human beings.

Hence, it is a beautiful prayer for every Muslim to ask always: ***“O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge.”*** (20:114)

The only limit set to the acquisition of knowledge in Islam is that Muslims should seek useful knowledge. Our great Prophet (pbuh) is reported as having said: *“My Lord, save me from the useless knowledge.”*

Any knowledge helping man in performing his God assigned role in this world is useful, other than that is considered useless knowledge.

Example of useless knowledge: Abul Hikam (Father of Wisdom) was the title of Amr Ibn Hesam, one of the bitterest enemies of the Holy Prophet (pbuh). Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) nicknamed him Abu Jahl (Father of Ignorance) because of his uncompromising attitude towards Islam.

From the above example we can see, how much our Holy Prophet (pbuh) disliked ignorant and at the same time we can learn from the following example, how much our Holy Prophet (pbuh) liked to learn.

The mosque of Medina was not only a place of worship. The believers assembled here to learn. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was present they heard his words of wisdom, his elucidation on the verses of the Holy Qur'an and benefited from his counsel. And when he was not present, other faithful companions taught what they had heard from the Prophet of Almighty God.

Once our Holy Prophet (pbuh) entered the Mosque before the prayer time. He found two groups in the Mosque. One group was busy with its own act of worship; some were reading the Holy Qur'an while the others were supplicating. The other group was in a corner busy learning. They learnt how to read and write and discussed the teachings of Islam and their application to their daily lives.

Looking at both, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) said: *"They are both engaged in useful pursuits. But I am a teacher. I shall join the group assembled to learn."* So he (pbuh) sat with the group of students.

SOME OF HIS WISE SAYINGS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF "KNOWLEDGE":

01. It is an obligation for every Muslim to seek knowledge.

02. To acquire knowledge is binding upon all Muslims, whether male or female.



03. Seek knowledge even if it be in China.

04. Seek knowledge from cradle to grave.

05. Scholars are the heirs of the prophets.

06. The ink of the learned will be weighed with the blood of the martyrs on the Resurrection Day; and then, the ink of the learned would be preferred to the blood of the martyrs.

07. Anyone who pursues a course in search of knowledge, God will ease his way to paradise.

08. Acquire knowledge, it enables its possessor to distinguish right from wrong; it lights the way to heaven.

09. The most learned of men is the one who gathers knowledge from others on his own; the most worthy of men is the most knowing and the meanest is the most ignorant.

10. The loss of running after an affair without learning about it is more than its benefit.

11. The superiority of a learned man over a worshipper is like that of the full moon over other stars.

12. Once addressing Imam Ali (pbuh), our Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: The sleep of a learned man is better than a thousand Rakats (Units) Namaz (prayer) of a worshipper. O Ali! No poverty is harder than ignorance and no worship can equal contemplation.

A PERFECT FAMILY MAN

Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is the supreme example of a family man. He was a loving husband, an affectionate father and a doting grandfather. As long as the faithful Khadija (pbuh) was alive, he never took another wife. Even later on in life, when he had married several women, he used to cherish the loving memory of the faithful Khadija (pbuh).

His marriages were not for pleasure, but were a humanitarian means to further the cause of Islam, as is evident from the women he married. In the case of Sawda, Umm Salama and Zainab bint Khuzaima, it was to take care of poor and helpless widows well in their middle ages, while the marriage to Juwairiyah was to grant her freedom from captivity. Still others such as those to Umm Habiba, Safiya, Ayesha, Hafsa and Maimoona were meant for uniting some prominent Arab tribes, who were often at loggerheads with each other, and also to safeguard the internal political status of the newfound Islamic State. And the marriage to Zainab bint Jahsh was for the sake of enacting a new law, because she was the divorcee of his adopted son Zaid bin Hareth. As the Holy Qur'an testifies, the Prophet married her in order to put an end to the prevalent belief that adopted sons were like real sons and that wives or widows of adopted sons were like daughter-in-laws. In short, the philosophy behind his marriages was entirely revolutionary and ushered in positive changes in ignorant Arabia.

He was an affectionate father and his only surviving child, daughter Fatima (pbuh), was dearer to him than life. His famous saying (Hadith): *"Fatima is a part of me, and whoever annoys her (in fact) annoys me,"* stands as a firm testimony to this fact. History is a witness that he used to stand up to greet his daughter. Many prominent and wealthy Arabs had approached him for Fatima's hand, but he politely refused them, and according to divine commandment married her to his faithful cousin Imam Ali (pbuh).

Hence Fatima and Ali were the parents of his two grandsons Hasan and Hussain; through whom the continuity of the Prophet's noble progeny has been ensured. Hasan and Hussain were the apple of his eyes and he affectionately doted on them. They used to play with him and accompany him to the mosque. Once when the two grandsons were seated on his shoulders, a companion remarked: "What and excellent mount", to which the Prophet retorted "What excellent riders too".

Thus, Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) behavior with his illustrious household (Ahlul-Bait) is a lesson for us. It was not blind love of a doting father or grandfather as some may misinterpret but was something divinely ordained as is clear from several verses of the Holy Qur'an. Therefore, it is obligatory for all Muslims to love and respect his chosen family, and adhere to their radiant path, which is the only way to save the Ummah from pitfalls. Praise be to Almighty God, Lord of the Worlds.

"One, who gets up in the morning and is not concerned about the affairs of other Muslims, is NOT a Muslim."

"One who listens to the call of a Muslim, and does not respond to it, is NOT a Muslim."





مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَآ أَحَدٍ
مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ
النَّبِيِّينَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

Muhammad is not the father of any of
your men, but (he is) the Messenger of Allah,
and the Seal of the Prophets:
and Allah has full knowledge of all things.

Holy Qur'an (33:40)

TOLERANCE AND FORGIVENESS

The Holy Prophet of Islam never attempted to retaliate against the insults and disrespect of anybody, and forgave people's mistakes or their misconduct. His reaction to the torment and disregard of the ignorant people was forgiveness and tolerance. In spite of all the tortures and torments that the Quraysh had inflicted upon the Holy Prophet, on conquering Makkah, he forgave them & set them free.

In the war of Uhud, a man named Wahshi killed Hamzah, the beloved uncle of the Holy Prophet of Islam. However, he forgave his sin. Also, he forgave the many torments and troubles that Abu Sufyan and his wife, Hind, had caused for him and he did not take revenge. However, for all his tolerance and mercifulness, he did not take pity on those who violated God's threshold and sacred precepts and would punish the violator in accordance with divine rules. In affecting God's orders, he would take no notice of anybody's intercession.

When the Prophet was informed that Fatima Mukhzumiyah had committed theft, he punished her according to the laws of Islam concerning theft and did not regard the intercession of Asamata bin Zayd in this respect, saying, "*The ruin and downfall of the preceding peoples was due to the fact that they did not enforce the laws of punishment in the case of the aristocrats and the people of status. I swear by the One in Whose hands is my life that even if Fatima (his daughter) had committed such a sin, I would cut off her hand*".

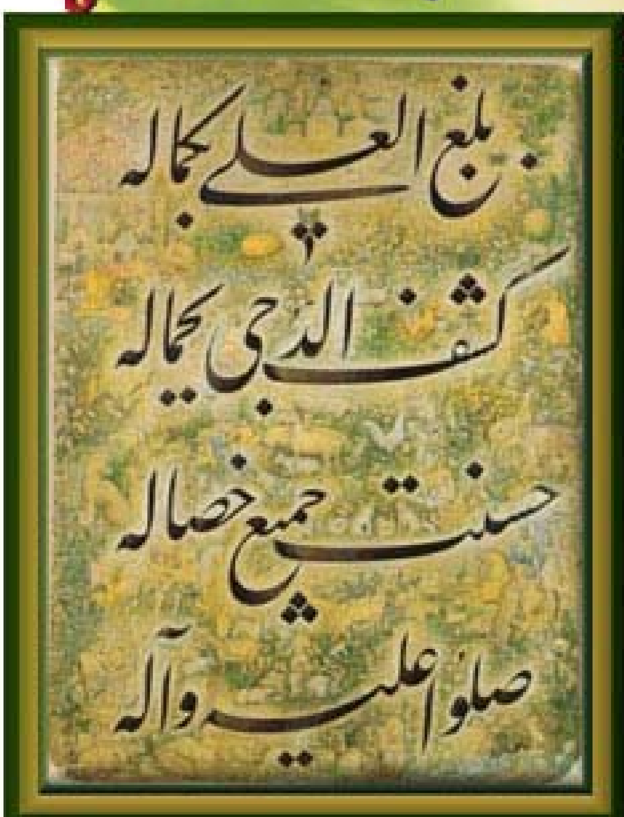
THE PROPHET WAS A PIOUS AND SINCERE WORSHIPPER OF GOD: The Holy Prophet of Islam had great love for ritual prayers so that during the night he would get up several times, brush his teeth, and then offer the most devoted prayers. He would stand worshipping God and talking sincerely to the Almighty Creator for so long that as a result of so much standing in prayer, his legs were swollen.

In such a small book it is not possible to describe all his praise-worthy manners and morals. In fact, we have just presented a pale reflection of his celestial, resplendent portrait so that all over the world Muslims who regard themselves as the followers of Islam can make his morals and conduct their own model of behavior and learn divine morality and correct programs for life from him.

All praise belongs to Almighty God, and may God's greetings be upon him, who was the selected superior and the best of pious human beings. And the greetings of the angels upon the faithful. We too greet him most cordially and sincerely. May he accept our respectful greetings as well as the greetings of you, our sisters and brothers in Islam. May Almighty God help all of us to follow exactly the blessed footsteps of the Holy Prophet, whose path is sure to lead us into eternal salvation and paradise.

Note: Prophet Mohammad (pbuh)'s life was a practical demonstration of the Holy Qur'an. His life and his character are exemplary for the Muslims. Even Non-Muslims have acknowledged the strength of his beautiful character as we can see in the following chapter. Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) spread the light of Islam to far flung areas in a short span of 23 years. But do not forget, it was based on a strong foundation of character, which he had built over 40 years prior to spreading the message of Islam. Today, we Muslims will have to think whether we have built our characters on the same pattern as was the character of our Prophet (pbuh). Unfortunately, our characters are not reflective of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh). As a result, Islam is disgraced and subdued in the entire world. This is all because we Muslims failed to follow our dear Prophet (pbuh) and failed to build our characters. May Almighty God help us all to strengthen our characters and become the beacons of Islam.

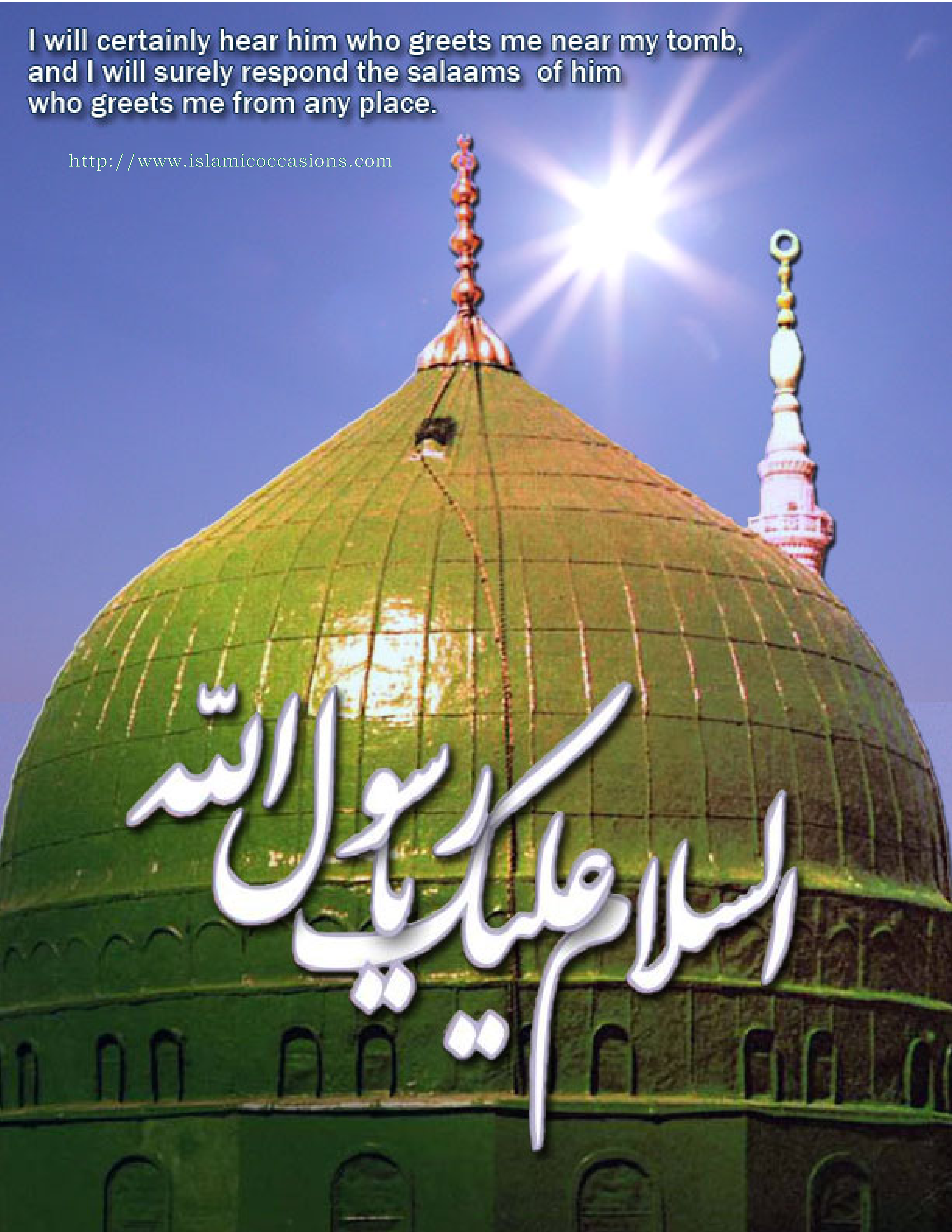






He attained the height of eminence by his perfection;
He dispelled the darkness (of the world) by his grace;
Excellent were all his qualities;
Pray for blessings on him and his descendants.

Shaikh Sa'di Sheerazi (RA)


I will certainly hear him who greets me near my tomb,
and I will surely respond the salaams of him
who greets me from any place.
http://www.islamicoccasions.com
السلام علیک یا رسول الله

A CALL TO PRAYERS

The greatness of our Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) can be understood still today, with the help of the following story:

It was a wintry morning with much snow falling, coupled with the blowing of a strong cold wind. It was not easy to come out in the open air. Yet one could see people rushing to their work and students with books in their hands hastening to their schools.



In one of the Mosques in Hamadan - Iran, religious students were assembling in order to attend a morning class. It was an important school of Islamic Theology and the tutor was also a very great learned one. His discourses were indeed very thought-provoking and so were his students quite intelligent. The tutor was none else but the world famous and a great Persian thinker and philosopher 'Ibn Sina', popularly known in Europe as Avicenna. His lectures and writings on various science subjects had become the standard text books for hundreds of years in the universities of Europe. Students admired his deep philosophical thinking. They felt honored to sit in his class and hear his inspiring lectures.

That cold morning, students had already assembled in the Mosque and were still anxiously awaiting the arrival of their learned tutor. They were wondering if the intense cold weather that day had delayed his coming. A few minutes had passed when suddenly the students witnessed the graceful arrival of 'Ibn Sina', their great learned tutor. They felt very happy and stood up as a mark of reverence and respect for him. He sat down at his usual place and exchanged greetings with his students. He commenced his discourse in his usual lucid manner that held his students spellbound. He also gave satisfactory answers to their questions. Among the students was one very young and enthusiastic by name 'Bahman Yar'. He was much closer and attached to 'Ibn Sina' the learned tutor. He was also the foremost among the clever and advanced students of the class. Every time he listened to the lectures of his tutor, he became more and more fascinated with his deep philosophy and knowledge on every subject.

He would say to his class-mates: "I wonder why our tutor 'Ibn Sina' does not claim to be a prophet despite his supreme intelligence and magic personality".

It is said that one day by chance 'Ibn Sina' was standing at a baker and loaf-seller shop. His attention was drawn to a very smart young boy who was displaying signs of much intelligence. The boy was saying to the baker: "My mother is requesting for a little fire." The baker responded: "Have you brought any pot to carry the fire?" "No! But I know how to carry it", replied the boy instantly. So saying he applied some ash over his palm and stretched his hand to the baker who placed a piece of burning firewood over his palm. Without any hesitation, the boy took it and went home.

'Ibn Sina' was rather amazed to see the intelligence and courage of this boy. He thought of having him for special training and education under his personal care. The proposal was communicated to the parents who agreed and entrusted the boy to his full care. Thus 'Bahman Yar' since then was staying at no other place except at the house of his tutor and care-taker, 'Ibn Sina'. They were all the time to be seen

together. The boy being highly intelligent derived the best of the knowledge that his tutor could impart. Years passed and 'Bahman Yar' grew up not only in age but also in knowledge and understanding under the patronage of his tutor. The learned tutor was also very proud of this most capable student.

It was one of the coldest nights of the wintry season. Midnight had passed and the snow-falling was very heavy. Both 'Ibn Sina' and 'Bahman Yar' were sleeping in one room under warm thick blankets. The light in the room was already extinguished but the student was still asking intricate questions on some deep subjects. The tutor was replying in his usual impressive manner. Fascinated by the supreme knowledge and deep philosophy of his tutor, he again made the suggestion which he had made before:

"Oh my learned tutor!" he pleaded, "with all this high status of knowledge that you enjoy and being master of all the sciences, why not declare yourself a prophet? Sir! Don't you think that you even excel some of the previous prophets in knowledge and your status today is unparalleled in the world! Should you decide to claim prophethood, no one would dare challenge you. Let me assure you that I shall be the first to offer my allegiance and would serve you with full faith."

Since 'Bahman Yar' was still young and immature, his above proposal to his tutor was rather emotional than logical. 'Ibn Sina' smiled but did not give any reply.

That night the cold weather had become extreme and there was heavy snow-falling. Both were already fast asleep. It was past midnight and suddenly 'Ibn Sina' woke up and raised his head out of the warm blanket. Incidentally he was very thirsty and the water-mug in the room was empty. So he decided to wake up his student to go out and bring him some water.

"Oh 'Bahman Yar'! My son 'Bahman Yar'! Please wake up and bring me some drinking water from outside", he said repeatedly.

"Is there no water in the water-mug near your goodself, Sir?" asked 'Bahman Yar'.

"No!" replied 'Ibn Sina'.

'Bahman Yar' raised his head and saw heavy snowfall outside. The thrilling sound of the strong cold wind also made him nervous to go out. Again 'Ibn Sina' grumbled: "Oh 'Bahman Yar'! Why the delay? Bring me some water, I am too thirsty."

'Bahman Yar' dared not come out of the warm blankets to face the cold weather outside the room. He was, therefore, putting forward lame excuses to his tutor.

"Oh my respected tutor! It is harmful for you to drink water now that you have just come out of the warmth of thick blankets. It is better you go to sleep again till the early morning which is not far off", said 'Bahman Yar'.

"My son! Bring me water, I am too thirsty. I myself am a medical expert and know better what is harmful than you do. I am unable to sleep, please bring me some water from outside", again appealed 'Ibn Sina'.

In response 'Bahman Yar' again put forward excuses and argued that he would catch cold and fall sick

if he were to go out in that extreme cold weather. So saying he went back to sleep.



There was dead silence everywhere and no sound of anything was to be heard. Outside it was still pitch dark except the first light of Subhe Sadiq (true dawn) in the eastern horizon had commenced to appear. Suddenly the silence broke with a melodious voice of a Muezzin - caller to prayer from the top of a Minaret at the nearby Mosque. After reciting some verses of the, Holy Qur'an, the Muezzin in a loud voice said, “Allaho Akber” - Allah is the Greatest. “Ash-Hado An La Ilaha Illallah” - I bear witness that there is no god except Allah.

Both the tutor and his student quietly listened to the melodious voice of the Muezzin. The call to prayers then followed to the words “Ash-Hado Anna Muhammadan Rasoolullah” - I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. On hearing this, ‘Ibn Sina’ thought of taking the opportunity of responding to the repeated proposal made to him by ‘Bahman Yar’. He said:

“Listen to me, oh my son ‘Bahman Yar’. Now I wish to reply to your repeated suggestion”. The student sat up to hear attentively of what his learned tutor abruptly wanted to say. ‘Ibn Sina’ then proceeded:

“You have been suggesting to me several times to claim prophethood, that people would put full faith in me and that you would be the first one to do so. Now look, you have been my close student for several years and benefited from me a great deal, yet you did not think it prudent to obey me by coming out of your warm bed for a moment and bring me water that I badly needed to quench my thirst. Instead you chose to put forward lame excuses.”

But think of this man who is now calling to prayers at the top of the Minaret after coming out in the coldest weather and making ablution with cold water in the early hour of this morning. It is for no other purpose but in obedience to and respect for the command of Almighty as conveyed by His apostle Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (pbuh) some four hundred years ago.

“What a great difference there is between me and that Prophet sent by Almighty God!”



MUHAMMAD (PBUH) THE GREATEST

Muhammad, the Prophet of Arabia (pbuh), has fulfilled for his people a role that combines the functions - of a distinguished prophet, statesman, author, and reformer. He (pbuh) has earned for himself as a consequence the respect and reverence of countless people.

To every Muslim on this planet, irrespective of cultural, geographical and political differences, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is Almighty God's greatest creation and was sent as a mercy for all mankind. Nearly 1.6 billion Muslims however, do not require any surveys, lists or research to arrive at this conclusion. It is a non-negotiable article of faith that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is the greatest. But, what about the non-Muslims?



Surprisingly, over the centuries many an eminent non-Muslim has rated Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) most highly and given due recognition to his greatness.

Historian, John William Draper in his well known work, *"A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe"*, observes:

"Four years after the death of Justinian, 569 A.D., was born at Makkah, in Arabia, the man who, of all men, has exercised the greatest influence upon the human race."

The well known British historian, Sir William Muir, in his *"Life of Mohammed"* adds:

"Our authorities, all agree in ascribing to the youth of Mohammad a modesty of deportment and purity of manners rare among the people of Makkah. The fair character and honorable bearing of the unobtrusive youth won the approbation of his fellow-citizens; and he received the title, by common consent, of Al-Ameen, the Trustworthy."

James Michener in his well known work, *"Islam, The Misunderstood Religion"* writes:

"Orphaned at birth, he was always particularly solicitous of the poor and the needy, the widow and the orphan, the slave and the downtrodden. At twenty he was already a successful business man, and soon became director of camel caravans for a wealthy widow. When he reached twenty-five his employer, recognizing his merit, proposed marriage. Even though she was fifteen years older, he married her, and as long as she lived remained a devoted husband."

The celebrated British writer, Thomas Carlyle, in his book *"On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History"*, observes:

"Ah on: this deep-hearted son of the wilderness with his beaming black eyes and open social deep soul, had other thoughts than ambition. A silent great man; he was one of those who cannot but be in earnest; whom Nature herself has appointed to be sincere. While others walk in formulas and hearsays, contented enough to dwell there, this man could not screen himself in formulas; he was alone with his own soul and the reality of things. The great mystery of Existence, as I said, glared in upon him, with its terrors, with its splendors; no hearsays could hide that unspeakable fact. 'Here am I'; such Sincerity as we name it, has in very truth something of divine. The work of such a man is a voice direct from Nature's own Heart. Men do and must listen to that as to nothing else; all else is wind in

comparison."

Dr. Marcus Dods, in his work, "*Mohammad, Buddah and Christ*" writes:

"Certainly he had two of the most important characteristics of the prophetic order. He saw truth about God which his fellowmen did not see, and he had an irresistible inward impulse to publicize this truth."

John Davenport in his well known work, "*An Apology for Mohammad and the Koran*", admits the honesty and sincerity behind Mohammad's claim of being an apostle of God, when he says:

"It is strongly corroborative of Mohammad's sincerity that the earliest converts of Islam were his bosom friends and the people of his household, who all intimately acquainted with his private life, could not fail to have detected those discrepancies which more or less invariably exist between the pretensions of the hypocritical deceiver and his actions at home."

Again John Davenport, in states:

"With all that simplicity which is so natural to a great mind, he performed the humblest offices whose homeliness it would be idle to conceal with pompous diction; even while Lord of Arabia, he mended his own shoes and coarse woolen garments, milked the ewes, swept the hearth, and kindled the fire. Dates and water were his usual fare and milk and honey his luxuries. When he traveled he divided his morsel with the servant. The sincerity of his exhortations to benevolence was justified at his death by the exhausted state of his coffers."

W. Montgomery Watt writes in his "*Mohammad at Makkah*":

"His readiness to undergo persecution for his beliefs, the high moral character of the men who believed in him and looked up to him as leader, and the greatness of his ultimate achievement - all argue his fundamental integrity. To suppose Muhammad as imposter raises more problems than it solves. Moreover, none of the great figures of history is so poorly appreciated in the West as Muhammad. Thus, not merely must we credit Muhammad with essential honesty and integrity of purpose, if we are to understand him at all: if we are to correct the errors we have inherited from the past."

A well known writer, Bosworth Smith, in his well known book "*Mohammad and Mohammadanism*", adds:

"Head of the State as well as of the Church, he was Caesar and Pope in one; but he was Pope without Pope's pretensions, Caesar without the legion of Caesar. Without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without a palace, without a fixed revenue, if ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by the right divine, it was Mohammad, for he had all the power without its instructions and without its supports."

James A. Michener, in his invaluable work, "*Islam: The Misunderstood Religion*", observes:

"...Forced now to fight in defense of the freedom of conscience which he preached, he became an accomplished military leader, Although he repeatedly went into battle outnumbered and out speared as much as five to one, he won some spectacular victories."

Stanley Lane-Poole, in his work, *"The Speeches and Table Talk of the Prophet Mohammad"* adds:

"The day of Mohammad's greatest triumph over his enemies was also the day of his grandest victory over himself. He freely forgave the Koraysh all the years of sorrow and cruel scorn in which they had afflicted him and gave an amnesty to the whole population of Makkah. Four criminals whom justice condemned made up Mohammad's proscription list, when he entered as a conqueror to the city of his bitterest enemies. The army followed his example, and entered quietly and peacefully; no house was robbed, no women insulted. One thing alone suffered destruction. Going to the Kaaba, Mohammad stood before each of the three hundred and sixty idols, and pointed to it with his staff, saying, 'Truth has come and falsehood has fled away!' and at these words his attendants hewed them down, and all the idols and household gods of Makkah and round about were destroyed. It was thus Mohammad entered again his native city, through all the annals of conquest there is no triumphant entry comparable to this one."

Alphonse of Lamartine, in his well known work, *"Histoire de la Turquie"*, observes:

"If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples and dynasties, but millions of men in one-third of the then inhabited world; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and the souls. On the basis of a Book, every letter of which has become law, he created a spiritual nationality which blended together peoples of every tongue and of every race. Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational beliefs, a founder of twenty terrestrial empires and one spiritual empire. Of all standards by which human greatness can be measured, we may well ask ... is there any man greater than Mohammed?"

George Bernard Shaw said about him:

"I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion, which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phase of existence, which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him - the wonderful man and in my opinion for from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Savior of Humanity."

"I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness: I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today."

(Sir George Bernard Shaw in '*The Genuine Islam,*' Singapore, Vol. 1, No. 8, 1936.)

Michael H. Hart, a Christian American, astronomer, mathematician, lawyer, chess master and scientist, after extensive research, published an incisive biography of the 100 most influential persons in history. The biographical rankings with explanations describe the careers of religious and political leaders, inventors, writers, philosophers, scientist and artists.

From this research, which included illustrious personalities such as Jesus Christ, Moses, Caesar, etc. Michael H. Hart rated Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as number one. He concluded the biography with the words “My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world’s most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels.”

(“*The 100: A ranking of the most influential persons in history*” New York, 1978, p. 33)

Dr. Annie Besant in her book “*The Life and Teachings of Muhammad*” Madras, 1932, p. 4. says:

“It is impossible for anyone who studies the life and character of the great Prophet of Arabia, who knows how he taught and how he lived, to feel anything but reverence for that mighty Prophet, one of the great messengers of the Supreme. And although in what I put to you I shall say many things which may be familiar to many, yet I myself feel whenever I re-read them, a new way of admiration, a new sense of reverence for that mighty Arabian teacher.”

Mahatma Gandhi, speaking on the character of Muhammad said:

“I wanted to know the best of one who holds today’s undisputed sway over the hearts of millions of mankind. I became more than convinced that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days in the scheme of life. It was the rigid simplicity, the utter self-effacement of the Prophet, the scrupulous regard for his pledges, his intense devotion to this friends and followers, his intrepidity, his fearlessness, his absolute trust in God and in his own mission. These and not the sword carried everything before them and surmounted every obstacle. When I closed the 2nd volume (of the Prophet’s biography), I was sorry there was not more for me to read of the great life.” [*Young India*, 1924]

The famous poetess of India, Sarojini Naidu says:

“It was the first religion that preached and practiced democracy; for, in the mosque, when the call for prayer is sounded and worshippers are gathered together, the democracy of Islam is embodied five times a day when the peasant and king kneel side by side and proclaim: ‘God Alone is Great’. I have been struck over and over again by this indivisible unity of Islam that makes man instinctively a brother.”

(S. Naidu, Ideals of Islam, vide Speeches & Writings, Madras, 1918, p. 169)

K. S. Ramakrishna Rao in his book ‘*Mohammed: The Prophet of Islam*’ writes:

“The personality of Muhammad is most difficult to get the whole truth of it. Only a glimpse of him I can catch. What dramatic succession of picturesque scenes? There is Muhammad the Prophet; there is Muhammad the General; Muhammad the King; Muhammad the Warrior; Muhammad the Businessman; Muhammad the Preacher; Muhammad the Philosopher; Muhammad the Statesman; Muhammad the Orator; Muhammad the Reformer; Muhammad the Refuge of Orphans; Muhammad the Protector of Slaves; Muhammad the Emancipator of Women; Muhammad the Judge; Muhammad the Saint... In all these magnificent roles and in all these departments of human activities he is equally a hero.”

CONCLUSION

It is unfortunate that the West instead of sincerely trying to understand the phenomenal success of Islam has considered it a rival religion. During the centuries of the crusades, all sorts of slanders were invented against Islam, this trend gained much force and impetus and a huge amount of literature was produced to tarnish the image of Islam and its preacher Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Truth needs no advocates to plead on its behalf. But the prolonged malicious propaganda against Islam has created great confusion even in the minds of some free and objective thinkers.

What we have witnessed early in 2006, starting with the offensive Cartoons published in several European newspapers in the name of freedom and the violent reaction by some Muslims across the world makes it a duty on every Muslim to help introduce the true picture of the beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to the world around us, introduce it the way Islam and the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) taught us to. In the Holy Qur'an, Almighty God states: ***"Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching, and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for thy Lord knows best who have strayed from His Path and who receive guidance."*** (16:125)

We end it by saying an Urdu language couplet:

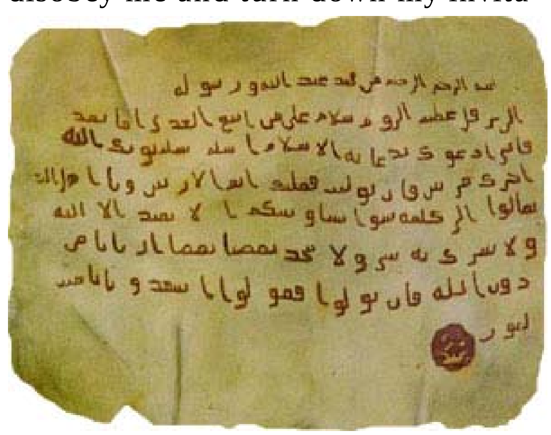
Batlado Gustakh-E-Nabi Ku Ghairat-E-Muslim Zinda Hai
Unper Mar Mitne Ka Jazba Kal Bhi Tha Aur Aaj Bhi Hai

A LETTER TO KHUSROW, THE KING OF IRAN

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.
From Muhammad, God's Messenger, to Khusrow, the King of Persia. Greetings to the followers of the right path, to those obedient to God and His Prophet, to those who bear witness to God's Oneness, who worship the One God, and who bear witness to the prophecy of God's servant, Muhammad.

Truly I call upon you to obey God's command and convert to Islam. I am God's Messenger to all the people so that living hearts will be awakened and illuminated and so that infidels will have no excuses. Submit to Islam so you will be safe and immune, and if you disobey me and turn down my invitation, you will be blamed for the sins of the magi.

A LETTER TO HARQAL, THE KING OF ROME



In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.
...I call upon you to submit to Islam. If you become a Muslim, you will share the Muslims gains and their losses, and if you do not want to become a Muslim yourself, then let your people freely convert to Islam or pay the poll tax, paid in lieu of conversion to Islam, and do not restrict them in choosing their faith.

The letters of the Holy Prophet of Islam were not exclusively written to Kings. Rather, he sent letters to various nations and to the followers of other faiths so all would be informed of the rising of the Sun of Islam.



وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾

And most surely you conform (yourself) to sublime morality.

Holy Qur'an (68:4)

Akramulla Syed